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Authority in the Viet Minh

1. Ho Chi Minh, a member of the Communist Party of Indochina (PCI), is the chief Communist leader in Southeast Asia. Since the invasion of South China by the Chinese Communists, Ho has been in close contact with the international Communist Party leadership, not only in matters concerning intelligence but also in the exchange of missions\*.
2. Ho exercises the highest authority in the Viet Minh regime and enjoys great personal prestige. He is in good health and has not been seriously ill since the beginning of hostilities in Indochina in 1946. Ho supervises resistance operations in Viet Nam in general and activities of the PCI in particular. Ho also makes many major military decisions. Vo Nguyen Giap, Commander-in-Chief of the Viet Minh Army, actually ranks third to Ho Chi Minh and Dang Xuan Khu in the Viet Minh regime.
3. Ho also controls the activities of the Viet Minh Tong-bo, the central committee of the PCI. His book, Modifications of Working Methods, published under the pseudonym X. Y. Z., is used as a guide for all can-bo (instructors). The following individuals, assisted by zone and provincial delegates, are responsible for the activities of the PCI:

Dang Xuan Khu, aka Truong Chinh

Secretary of the Dang-bo (private organization of the PCI)

Nguyen Van Minh, aka Ba Minh,  
aka Minh Dao Cong

Hoang Quoc Viet, aka Ha Ba Cang

Ha Huy Giap

4. Tong-bo members who have accepted positions in the Ho Chi Minh Government work for the PCI at the same time. Tong-bo members, including Dang Xuan Khu and Phan Van Dong, Vice President of the Ho Chi Minh Government, behave humbly

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before Ho and speak to him with the greatest deference. Only a few persons, including some elder can-bo, speak to him as an equal.\*\* All political questions which the Tong-bo members cannot solve are referred to Ho. Ho relies heavily on the advice of Le Gian, head of the Viet Minh Security Services, and on Vo Nguyen Giap.

5. All levels of PCI organization, like the Tong-bo, are directly controlled by the can-bo. Elections have been held since 1947, contrary to the former arbitrary method of nominating organization chiefs, and the position of Secretary of each organization is assigned to can-bo who enjoy the confidence of the majority. Although the Directing Committee of a group of cells, or intergroup, may contain one or more high-level Communist Party can-bo, cases exist in which the Directing Committee retains control of the cell and the can-bo merely act as advisors.
6. In the Ho Chi Minh Government services, however, behind-the-scenes control is evident. Since the policy of the government has become openly pro-Communist, Communist can-bo have been assigned to the presidency of the Administrative and Resistance Committees of canton level and above. These can-bo control, directly or indirectly, the work of the committees.
7. In those government services headed by a non-Communist, who has been appointed for political or technical reasons, control is exercised by the Communist can-bo in the various sections of the service. The non-Communist head is actually a figurehead with no authority, even in such routine matters as organizing the daily routine of his personnel. If he expresses any dissatisfaction with this strict control, he is removed from his position.\*\*

#### How Viet Minh Headquarters Area

8. When French forces attacked Phu Tho in August 1950, the headquarters of the Ho Chi Minh Government was moved 50 or 60 kilometers to the northeast in order to prevent a large-scale French attack in the Viet Bac Intersector. A small liaison group still exists at the old headquarters to carry on relatively unimportant routine work.
9. It is probable, for the following reasons, that the government has returned to its former headquarters:
  - a) In order to keep the move secret, can-bo and government personnel were forced to cut down trees and build their own homes in the new site. They consequently provide inadequate shelter and it would be very difficult to find sufficient laborers at the new site to build a headquarters comparable to the old one.
  - b) The provision of food at the new site requires too much time. It would take several months, during which time headquarters personnel would have to live on rice and salt, to clear the forest and plant vegetables. The former headquarters was supplied by vegetables from its own garden.
  - c) In early 1950, the Tong-bo assumed direct control over the Provinces in the North Viet Nam Intersectors. The Intersectors, which were formerly on an intermediate level, are to be gradually abolished. Because of the distance of the new headquarters from Intersectors III and IV, which can be reached only by travel over 50 kilometers of small trails, the Tong-bo cannot directly control the administration of the Provinces. Prior to the French attack, the Tong-bo headquarters was six kilometers away and separated by a stream from the government headquarters.

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Discord Within the Viet Minh

10. With one or two exceptions, no serious disagreement exists among upper echelon Communist leaders in the Viet Minh. This is probably the result of their proximity to Ho Chi Minh's headquarters, their isolation in the jungle and the fact that their jobs are primarily administrative, in which they have little contact with people. No Communist can-bo of zone level or higher have been discharged, although some have been demoted, as was General Nguyen Binh. General Nguyen Son was summoned before the Tong-bo for censure. Tran Huy Lieu was discharged (sic).
11. In May 1948, a dispute arose between Nguyen Son and Vo Nguyen Giap on the occasion of officer promotion. Nguyen Son refused his promotion to General of Brigade as a protest against Giap's promotion to General of the Army Corps. Son is extremely proud of his military experience and his participation in the Chinese Communist Long March. Although Son probably acknowledges Giap's ability as a military leader, he has on occasion been openly contemptuous of Giap.
12. Discord is fairly common among can-bo on the zone level and below and is generally based on personal interest, jealousy and competition for important positions. These can-bo are quick to expose their associates who use their official positions to profit from crimes such as larceny, extortion, murder or smuggling. Dang Dinh Hien, Director of the security organization in Intersector III, and Dang Tran Dzuong, Chief of the Hanam (106-53, 11-57) Security Service, were engaged in assassination for gold. Another example is the theft of six million piasters involving Colonel Tran Dzu Chau and the chief of the military supply service.
13. Although Titoism is not active at present among Viet Minh leaders, even high-level can-bo of the PCI have expressed apprehension about the future of the resistance movement if Ho Chi Minh should die. They are not worried about the continuation of the fight against the French, but about internal dissension in the PCI resulting from lack of discipline among the Communist can-bo. Probable defectors from the Viet Minh, given the proper opportunity, are Nguyen Binh, Nguyen Son, Tran Van Giau, Minister of Information, and Nguyen Khanh Toan, Minister of Education.
14. Ho Chi Minh is himself aware of this situation and in order to preserve unity in the PCI after his death proposed the elevation of Dang Xuan Khu to the presidency. When this nomination was rejected, he proposed Pham Van Dong. This was also rejected and Ho was forced to content himself with Pham Van Dong as Vice President. Those who were unaware of the strategy behind Ho's proposal believed that Ho opposed their election, feeling that they lacked sufficient popular support. It is customary, however, for a Communist leader to install his successor before his death, and to secure his position with propaganda designed for public consumption. Since Khu and Dong are well known to the population, the appointment of either as president would have evoked no public objections. Moreover, Ho would have retained the presidency of the National Assembly, while Khu or Dong would only have been president of the Council. It is probable, therefore, that in spite of his influence over the group, Ho's proposal was overruled by the Tong-bo.

Attitude of Viet Minh Leaders Toward Communist China

15. The Chinese Communists are regarded as saviors by the Viet Minh, because their victory over the Chinese Nationalists in South China released the Viet Minh from its isolated position between the Chinese Nationalist and French armies. Because of its long years of experience in fighting the Chinese Nationalists, Communist can-bo in North Viet Nam consider the Chinese Communist Party as a model for the PCI. Since early 1950, articles such as MAO Tse-tung's Concepts

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have been studied and compared with the doctrines of Marx and Lenin in the training of high-level political can-bo at the Nguyen Ai Quoc School, the political training school of the PCI.

16. Chinese Communist aid to the Viet Minh has been discussed since early 1950, not only by the can-bo, who naturally welcome this aid, but by the people as a whole. In early 1950, thousands of people from the delta and highlands areas worked on the repair of roads and bridges for the transport of Chinese Communist arms and ammunition to the Viet Minh. The two main roads used by the Chinese are the Ha Giang-Tuyen Quang-Thai Nguyen road and the Cao Bang-Bac Kan-Thai Nguyen road. Ten airfields are being built in the Viet Bac Intersector for the use of Chinese Communist cargo planes.
17. Although all of the Viet Minh leaders hope for increased arms aid, none of the major Viet Minh officials want the active participation of Chinese Communist troops in the fight against the French. Generals Nguyen Son and Le Thiet Hung (Nguyen Thiet Hung), who have spent some time in China with the Chinese Nationalist and Chinese Communists, are particularly opposed to the entrance of Chinese Communist troops. They feel that it would be difficult to expel the Chinese once Chinese Communist troops were committed to Viet Nam.
18. Viet Minh leaders who have spent some time in China and members of missions recently returned from China state that the population in Central and South China is suffering from a shortage of food and that traces of war are everywhere. The Chinese Communists can provide weapons, but have no surplus food to send, even if the Viet Minh desired it. As for technical advisors, the Chinese Communists can provide only military instructors. Military engineers or scientists would have to come from the Soviet Union or its East European satellites.

#### Attitude of Viet Minh Leaders Toward the Bao Dai Government

19. The Communists are little concerned with those Vietnamese who openly collaborate with the French, but they regard anti-Viet Minh Vietnamese nationalists as dangerous enemies. Bao Dai is seldom mentioned among Viet Minh leaders. For propaganda purposes he is naturally called a traitor and a puppet, but privately they admit that he is not a man to sell his country for money or position. Although this could weaken the Viet Minh position, Viet Minh leaders feel that Bao Dai has neither the support of the people nor sufficient experience in resistance methods. They fear, however, that the international situation is working to Bao Dai's advantage and that sooner or later the French will be forced to grant Viet Nam its independence, proving to the people that Bao Dai is neither a traitor nor a puppet.

#### Attitude of Viet Minh Leaders Toward the United States

20. When the Chinese Nationalists were defeated in China, Viet Minh leaders believed the attention of the United States would be centered on Western Europe. This theory was played up in propaganda issued by Tran Van Giau and was the essence of Ho Chi Minh's birthday message published in Qua Quoc calling on the people to celebrate V-day on his birthday, 19 May 1950.
21. United States interest in Viet Nam became obvious after the appointment of a prominent individual as Ambassador to Viet Nam. Directing his remarks toward several important non-Communists in the Viet Minh, a member of the Tong-bo warned that "United States intervention in Viet Nam has affected the spirit of certain high-ranking can-bo." It has actually forced a revision of Viet Minh policy on all levels.

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22. The group most affected by United States policy in Viet Nam is the opportunists in the PCI, including the mandarins and intellectuals recently admitted, who compose the majority of PCI membership. United States policy also provides an incentive for high-ranking non-Communist can-bo and tends to steady their point of view. Their weakness lies in the fact that they do not believe in their ability to carry on the nationalist struggle and consequently have no real solidarity. They are therefore easy to bribe and in any event would rally to Bao Dai if the proper opportunity were presented, because of the unfavorable attitude of the Ho Chi Minh Government toward non-Communists.

23. In order to prevent pessimism from spreading among the population, especially after so much false propaganda, Ho Chi Minh appealed to the people to be patient. He often compared the resistance to a long road on which the obstacles become greater as the traveler nears his goal.

25X1A \* [REDACTED] Comment. [REDACTED] c reports on the presence of an international mission at Ho Chi Minh headquarters. 25X1A

25X1A \*\* [REDACTED] Comment. This refers only to the choice of words used in Vietnamese for addressing persons of various social levels.

25X1A \*\*\* [REDACTED] Comment. [REDACTED] b contains a list of non-Communist officials in the Ho Chi Minh Government. 25X1A

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